

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Maria CAMPBELL DAVIS and Abdel Wahab  
ALAUSSOS, on behalf of themselves and all others  
similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

v.

U.S. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION  
SERVICES; Kenneth T. CUCCINELLI, Senior Official  
Performing Duties of the Director, U.S. Citizenship and  
Immigration Services, in his official capacity; Chad  
WOLF, Secretary of the Department of Homeland  
Security, in his official capacity; Kathleen BAUSMAN,  
Field Office Director, U.S. Citizenship and  
Immigration Services, Philadelphia Field Office, in her  
official capacity; and William P. BARR, Attorney  
General, in his official capacity.

Defendants.

Case No. 2:20-cv-02770

**DECLARATION OF AARON  
KORTHUIS**

I, Aaron Korthuis, declare as follows:

1. I submit this declaration in support of Plaintiffs' complaint and motion for class certification. I am over the age of 18, have personal knowledge of the facts set forth herein, and, if called as a witness, I could and would testify competently as set forth below.
2. I am an attorney with the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project, counsel of record for Plaintiffs. I am appearing *pro hac vice* before this Court. *See* Dkt. 12.
3. Attached are three supporting declarations that were inadvertently omitted from Plaintiffs' initial filing of the motion for class certification (Dkt. 2). Counsel for Plaintiffs therefore respectfully asks that the Court consider these omitted materials as part of the motion for class certification filed on June 10, 2020.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the state of Washington and the laws of the United States that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed this 20th day of July, 2020, in Seattle, Washington.

s/ Aaron Korthuis  
Aaron Korthuis  
Northwest Immigrant Rights Project  
615 Second Avenue, Suite 400  
Seattle, WA 98104  
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humanitarian groups. I am also an active member of the Naturalization Working Group (NWG), a collaboration of national and local organizations that is committed to helping legal permanent residents become American citizens. The NWG works to improve federal policies and practices relative to naturalization and to educate legislators and policymakers about the need to address barriers to naturalization.

3. Prior to the USCIS Philadelphia Field Office suspending routine in-person services on or about March 18, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, I regularly accompanied clients to naturalization interviews and once in a while accompanied them to naturalization ceremonies at which a USCIS officer administered the oath of allegiance]. The number of clients that I accompanied to interviews has varied over the years from one or two a week to over 15 a week.

4. At the end of the naturalization interview, the USCIS officer usually hands the applicant for citizenship a form that indicates the outcome of the interview. This is a template form with boxes next to various interview outcomes, including that the person's application was recommended for approval, that a decision could not be made at that time (and would require supervisory review), more information was needed, or that the applicant did not pass certain portions of the exam (civics, reading, writing, inadequate medical waiver form, etc.) and would be called in for a re-examination on these elements.

5. If the application was approved and a naturalization ceremony was taking place on the same day of the interview, on rare occasions the officer might tell the person to stay or come back for the ceremony. More frequently, if the application was approved and there were openings in oath ceremonies in the upcoming week, the officer offers the applicant the choice of attending one of those ceremonies if they were free; if not, they would be sent a notice for a future ceremony date. Most applicants are merely sent ceremony notices via mail within one to

two months. Those requesting name changes would be given judicial ceremonies, which may take several months (and often much more where judicial ceremonies may only be conducted a few times a year). The majority of Philadelphia's administrative ceremonies are done at the local office with the exception of a few ceremonies held on special occasions at other locations for large groups (for example, around July 4).

6. Prior to mid-March 2020, USCIS held these oath ceremonies at the USCIS Field Office in Philadelphia. Three ceremonies were held every Monday and three every Friday. Seventy applicants were invited to each ceremony, with approximately 420 new citizens being naturalized each week. I was able to confirm this information at a recent Stakeholder Meeting (virtually) with the Philadelphia Field Office.


7. In mid-March 2020, USCIS began contacting individuals either by mail or by phone informing them that their oath ceremonies had been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

8. Our office has a half dozen clients whose oath ceremony were cancelled in this way. To date, none of my clients whose oath ceremonies were cancelled have had these ceremonies rescheduled. Becoming a U.S. citizen is very important to our clients, especially to one elderly client, a former refugee from Bhutan, who had lost her badly-needed SSI benefits because she did not naturalize within seven years of entry. These benefits will be restored upon her receipt of U.S. citizenship.

9. At the aforementioned USCIS Stakeholder Meeting, we were informed plans to resume oath ceremonies next week. We were told that the ceremonies would be very small (only 5 people per ceremony) in order to observe important safety measures. They plan to hold several such ceremonies each day. This would amount to approximately 75 applicants being naturalized each week, in comparison to the 420 per week being naturalization prior to the pandemic.

10. I, Lori Alexander, declare under penalty of perjury of the laws of the State of Pennsylvania and the United States that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Executed this 4th day of June, 2020, in Blue Bell, Pennsylvania.



Lori Alexander



Immigration Appeals representative who handle naturalizations in my office.

4. After a naturalization interview at the Philadelphia Field Office, the interviewing officer provides the applicant a check-box form that indicates (1) whether he or she passed the English or civics test; and (2) whether the application has been approved or whether it remains pending. If the application is approved at the interview, USCIS typically sends a scheduling notice within one to two weeks after the interview. If the application requires further review, USCIS sends the scheduling notice when it has been approved, without sending a prior approval notice.

5. Prior to mid-March 2020, USCIS held these oath ceremonies at its Philadelphia Field Office several times a week, and also held occasional ceremonies for people changing their names at the Federal District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. In my experience there were approximately fifty to seventy people scheduled for each ceremony.

6. On March 17, 2020, USCIS announced that its field offices would close on March 18, 2020. At that time, USCIS began issuing notices to individuals informing them that their oath ceremonies had been cancelled due to the covid-19 pandemic.

7. I, Rebecca Hufstader, declare under penalty of perjury of the laws of the State of Pennsylvania and the United States that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Executed this 5th day of June, 2020, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

/s/Rebecca Hufstader  
Rebecca Hufstader, Esq.  
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scheduling the date and place of the oath ceremony within the week. If the application was approved pending supervisory review, USCIS sends a notice scheduling the date and place of the oath ceremony via mail usually later.

5. Prior to mid-March 2020, USCIS held these oath ceremonies at the Philadelphia Field Office. Based on information provided by USCIS officials at the June 2, 2020 Philadelphia USCIS Stakeholder's meeting, led by USCIS Field Office Director Kathleen Bausman and USCIS Community Relations Officer Jwana Smith, prior to the pandemic the Philadelphia USCIS Field Office was conducting naturalization ceremonies on Mondays and Fridays, with two ceremonies scheduled in one day. Approximately 420 individuals would naturalize every week. The USCIS is set to reopen on June 4, 2020.

6. Upon reopening, the USCIS Philadelphia office will be organizing oath ceremonies with 5 people per ceremony. They have not set out exactly how many ceremonies will be conducted per day or per week.

7. In mid-March 2020, USCIS began issuing notices to individuals informing them that their oath ceremonies had been cancelled due to the covid-19 pandemic.

I, Camille Van Kote, declare under penalty of perjury of the laws of the State of Pennsylvania and the United States that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Executed this 4th day of June, 2020, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

  
Camille Van Kote